

Lorton Parish Council

Minutes of the parish council meeting held on Wednesday 5th Nov' 2025

Present: Cllrs Peter Deeks (chair), Glenis Postlethwaite, (vice-chair), Garan Comley, Cathy Lee, Bruce Wilson.

Cumberland Councillor. Cllr Jill Perry.

Clerk, Mike Milner. 2 members of the public.

888.00 Apologies for absence, None, but clerk advised that Cllr Zindzi Creswell had resigned from the parish council with immediate effect on the 7 October.

889.00 Declaration of Interest. None

890.00 To approve and accept the minutes of the last Lorton Parish Council held on Wednesday 3rd September 2025, as a true record.

890.01 Chair reminded Cllrs of the previous discussions and Chair's note on the content of the minutes and then Cllrs unanimously resolved to approve the minutes.

891.00 Public participation. Approx. 15 mins.

891.01 No reports from September. One member of the public present raised the issue of recent flooding by the river and bridge. The chair advised that the area under discussion was actually in Blindbothel Parish and that the recent heavy rain had highlighted that the current Melbreak Communities website required to be updated about the emergency plan. Cllr G.P who is chair of Melbreak Communities website was fully aware of the issues and would be resolving with the Lorton resident in charge of the emergency plan. Agreed Cllr BW will take a co-ordinating role in this matter

892.00 Police Matters.

892.01 clerk had circulated the e-newsletter. Clerk confirmed he was booked to attend a Police Teams meeting on 12th November at 6pm. Cllr G.P asked that theft of 2 convex mirrors was passed on to police, but she had not reported them directly.

893.00 Applications for development.

893.01 7/2025/2135 Orchard Cottage, clerk advised that LDNP Planning Office had refused the request to change the S106 conditions. Decision date 25/9/2025.

893.02 T/2025/0153 Lorton Park, clerk had submitted a report as per last meetings decision by council to approve the tree felling request.

894.00 Matters concerning Cumberland Councillor.

894.01 Cllr J.P was able to report that the new waste collection system appeared to be working efficiently. Currently a transport consultation is in progress which the public could contribute to online. Chair thanked her for her attendance and asked if she wished to remain, invitation accepted.

895.00 Receive internally audited 6 months parish accounts ending 30/9/2025. Docs circulated prior to the meeting.

895.01 clerk had circulated the accounts which had been independently audited as they were the half yearly accounts. Cllr B.W asked about the tennis court rent. Cllr B.W felt it was undervalued. Chair Cllr P.D advised that it was only the rent for the land for the court in the Parish Field and that as the ground was only approved for recreational use, the rent reflected that in its commercial valuation some years ago. The observation was made about potential parking revenue, but no further action.

895.02 Cllrs resolved to accept the half yearly accounts.

896.00 Discuss current year's budget, and proposed budget for financial year 2026/27. Documents circulated prior to the meeting. Precept to be resolved at January meeting.

896.01 clerk had circulated a copy of his current budget update and proposed budget for 2026/27.

896.02 clerk ran through the current figures and those for next year's with explanations. No decision required until January meeting.

897.03 The final precept figure would be decided in January.

898.00 Sign the clerk's new contract of employment, to acknowledge the rate increase as agreed at September meeting, minute note 878.01 confirms.

898.01 clerk and chair signed the revised contract reflecting the salary approved at the September meeting.

899.00. Resolve to approve the Lorton Parish Council Complaints Procedure Policy, V6, which was circulated on 19th September to all councillors, following concerns about wording and accuracy of actions that would be followed. All fully clarified in the 19th September email and document approved by CALC.

899.01 Complaints Procedure Policy was duly approved by cllrs. Cllr B.W stated a review date was not given, although the final wording stated to be reviewed in 5 years if not advised differently by legislation. Review date to be added to the Procedure.

900.00 Update on confirmation Melbreak Communities Website still fit for purpose under Assertion 10 guidelines and potential cost of providing all councillors and clerk with a gov.uk email address.

900.01 Clerk advised that after email exchanges and telephone conversations with Public Services Office in London he had established that Melbreak Communities could remain the parish council website. An appropriate note on the home webpage advising that if there are issues reading or displaying material, then contact the phone number and email address. Clerk confirmed he already made his phone and email public, so that was not an issue.

900.02 Clerk then advised about the gov.uk email address, explain he had chosen at random 5 from the 20 approved "registrars" who can provide the appropriate email system. One company would cost £1679 per annum plus VAT. Another £302 per annum plus VAT, a third £270 plus VAT per annum and he was recommending a company in Manchester, MacIntosh Electronics, which would cost £57 per annum plus VAT.

900.03 Cllrs after listening to the explanation agreed to use that company and agreed that the domain name would be www.lortonpc.gov.uk, subject to Cabinet office approval.

900A.00 Parish Plan- Update on implementation.

900A.01 Chair P.D and Cllr G.C would prepare the plan for its next implementation stage and updating the local residents.

901.00 YTH Development Group. Update on Joint Working Party and planning application.

901.01 Cllr C.L updated on the YTH development status and advised that a planning application is due to be submitted shortly. Cllr C.L. completed her presentation by requesting that the parish council write a letter of support in principle to accompany the planning application when it was initially submitted to the LDNP Planning Authority. Cllrs had various views on the legitimacy of such a letter and finally the chair advised he would consider writing a draft letter to accompany the planning application, which he would circulate.

902.00 Clarify and confirm what speed limit and warning signs will be purchased and installed by the parish council. Defining the areas, restricted to the school area with 20mph advisory signage, or wider area across High and Low Lorton?

902.01 Cllrs discussed where were the best locations for traffic speed warning sign. Cllr B.W favoured outside the school, however after further discussion it was decided that Chair Cllr P.D and Cllr C.L would walk the village and choose the locations for signs stating 20 Plenty at the village entrances.

902.02 Clerk requested that they photograph the chosen location, if needs be mark on a map and very importantly measure the diameter of the existing pole the signs are to be attached to, as poles provided by Highways and lamppost poles varied in diameter. Details to be forwarded to clerk for ordering and future retention as a record of council's action.

903.00 Chair to advise on the current position on the Tennis Club lease renewal and also progress of the repair and cost to parish benches located in the parish.

903.01 Chair Cllr P.D explained that the lease renewal had taken so much time, due to obtaining quotes for legal services, to be paid by tennis club. It was agreed one solicitor would act for both the tennis club and the parish council and that a "Chinese wall" would operate within the solicitor's office. Lease hopefully would now be drawn up and ready for signing without any further delay.

903.02 chair then updated on the repairs to benches and the cost. Chair explained that the delay in undertaking the repairs was as it had been agreed to repair the worst bench first. All timbers required replacing. The current cost was £440 for the timbers, which was being confirmed by the timber merchant, plus the labour, fixings and appropriate wood stain to complete the job. Cllr C.L doubted the value of the work and felt this bench should be abandoned.

903.03 Cllrs then discussed the benches as an historical feature of the village. Eventually the chair requested a vote on the continued repair of the benches including the one which was situated by sewage works bend and needed the most work. By 4-1 it was agreed the project would proceed.

903.04 Chair Cllr P.D then confirmed that in a recent storm that a Rowan Tree, in the Village Pound, had been blown down. The trunk had been damaged by strimming around it. Chair had met with local tree surgeon Paul Livesey at the Pound and discussed necessary work to make safe various trees in the Pound and also remove the felled Rowan. PL had quoted a price of £275 ex VAT and Cllrs unanimously agreed the work be undertaken. Future thought is to be given to what to replace the Rowan tree with, it cannot be a big tree due to the close proximity of the Boon Beck bridge.

904.00 Christmas edition of the Lorton newsletter, content and copy date for distribution.

904.01 Chair Cllr P.D ran through a list of items for content. Cllr P.D would this time compile the newsletter from submitted content. All content to Cllr P.D by 19th November, the completed newsletter in a Word Document format to the clerk Sunday 23rd November afternoon, clerk to forward to printer that evening.

905.00 Progress reports, clerk.

905.01 clerk updated the Cllrs on UU proposals for Crummock Water weir removal. Clerk advised there had been a meeting with UU a few weeks ago and that another meeting was proposed. UU are proposing three public meetings to be held in January 2026, one location will be Loweswater Village Hall. After UU have got the feedback from those meetings, they will formulate the final planning application proposal and submit it by the end of March 2026. UU hope the application will be considered and approved by mid-2026 and works will commence end of 2026, early 2027 at the latest.

905.02 Clerk enquired about the current position of the pathway which is currently a permissive path between Low Lorton and Church Lane. Chair advised due to time of the year the weed growth had receded. Council needs to consider a request making the pathway a PROW moving its status up from permissive.

905.03 clerk enquired about the position about the private property sign which should be attached to Boon Beck bridge. Cllr G.C advised that he would be supergluing the sign in place when weather conditions permitted.

906.00 Councillors Reports.

906.01 Cllr G.P advised that numerous activities were being undertaken by Melbreak Community groups, it was thriving.

906.02 Cllr B.W did wonder as there was a vacancy with the resignation of Cllr Z.C whether the parishioner who had attended the meeting that evening, would consider joining the parish council by co-option. It was agreed the Cllr BW will speak to the person concerned.

906.03 Chair Cllr P.D advised that wearing his First Responders hat, doing an audit of the defibrillators in the Melbreak Valley, he had spoken to other parish council chairs in the valley and he would be asking parish councils to contribute towards the replacement batteries and pads.

907.00 Correspondence.

907.01 There had been much email traffic about the appearance of St George England flags and also Union Jacks attached to lamppost etc in Lorton. As none of the properties belonged to the parish council, no action could be taken.

907.02 Final invoice from Tivoli £259.09 for last cut of season of the Parish Field, school backed charged, invoice No 6, £107.95.

907.03 Email exchanges about village planters their replacement and new compost and bulbs for next year.

907.04 Peter Walter's email circulated.

907.05 The school have made their playground available as a parking area, costs and promotion of the facility to be in the next newsletter. Cllrs made the observation that children use the playground outside of school hours. Safety issue?

907.06 Low Lorton's recent road resurfacing had created many email and phone calls about the closure and its signage.

907.07 Compost receipt received from Chris Poate, £62.91.

907.08 Bulbs for new planters, £103.74, from Pam Jacques.

907.09 Request from Charity Commission for Lorton Parish Council to make the annual charity return. All duly completed and submitted and acknowledged.

907.10 an invoice received for £249.90 from Pam Jaques to cover the cost of replacing the 10 village planters.

907.11 Bigfoot had submitted his invoice for grass cutting as per his contract, September and October, £267.95 x 2 = £535.90.

907.12 Simone Morgan has submitted invoice for £30 for her half yearly audit.

907.13 Clerk enquired about what progress of the complaints that had been submitted. Clerk updated.

907.14 Final correspondence was clerk resignation as clerk for Lorton Parish Council. He would remain in post for the January and March meetings, to complete the current financial year and present accounts for the year at May meeting. Chair thanked him for his contribution since 2018.

2026.908.00 Payments for approval.

M Milner Intpay 275, £199.30, salary October £199.30 only.

HMRC PAYE Intpay 276, Clerks tax £50.00, October 2025.

Above payment to conform with HMRC submission timescales.

M Milner Intpay 277, £251.70, Salary Nov, Expenses £52.20

HMRC PAYE, Intpay 278, £52.20, clerk's Nov' PAYE.

Tivoli Intpay 279, £259.09 Parish Field September cut. Back charged School £107.95

M Milner Intpay 277, £251.70, Salary Nov, Expenses £52.20
HMRC PAYE, Intpay 278, £52.20, clerk's Nov' PAYE.
Tivoli Intpay 279, £259.09 Parish Field September cut. Back charged School £107.95
Chris Poate, Intpay 280, £62.91, compost for new village planters.
Pam Jaques, Intpay 281, £103.74. new bulbs for village planters.
Pam Jaques, Intpay 282, £249.90, 10 new village planters.
Harvey Davidson, Bigfoot, Intpay 283, £535.90, September and October grass. £267.95 x 2.
Simone Morgan, Interpay 284, £30.00, half yearly audit fee.

All Payments approved.

Meeting closed 9.35pm.

**909.00 Date and time of next meeting Wednesday 7th January 2026 at 7.30pm,
the meeting will be held in Yew Tree Hall.**

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